

ABCs of Good Health Fact Sheets

Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.

The base of the Food Guide Pyramid is filled with breads, cereals, rice and pasta, and forms the Grain Group. It is the largest food group on the Pyramid indicating that the largest number of servings should come from the Grain Group for a healthy diet. This means eat six to 11 servings of grains every day.

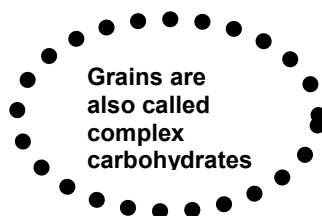
What counts as a serving?

- 1 slice of bread
- About 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal
- ½ cup of cooked cereal, rice or pasta

Good news for health-conscious consumers

- **Lowers the percent of fat calories**

As long as you keep within your calorie level, eating more complex carbohydrates, perhaps in place of a higher-fat food, helps to lower the percent of fat calories in your overall diet.



- **B vitamins**

Many grain products supply B vitamins and iron. Although their functions are varied and unique, most B vitamins help your body produce energy within its trillions of cells.

- **Low in fat and cholesterol**

Being plant sources of food, most grain products are low in fat and cholesterol. Exceptions are those foods which are prepared with higher-fat and cholesterol-containing ingredients, such as croissants, pastries, some crackers and foods that are fried like donuts and hushpuppies.

Remember: It is not the bread, pasta, or rice that supplies fat, but what you serve with or on them or how they are prepared.

- **Fiber**

To increase health benefits, many experts recommend eating at least 25 to 30 grams of fiber per day. Whole grains contain the outer layers of the grain, called the bran. The bran supplies large amounts of B-vitamins, trace minerals and dietary fiber. Dietary fiber can be insoluble or soluble. Wheat bran is an example of insoluble fiber, which aids in digestion. Oat bran is an example of soluble fiber, which helps lower blood cholesterol levels and regulate the body's use of sugars.

Dietary Guidelines 2000

The **ABC's** of good health

Aim for fitness

- Aim for a healthy weight.
- Be physically active each day.

Build a healthy base

- Let the Pyramid guide your food choices.
- Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.
- Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.
- Keep food safe to eat.

Choose sensibly

- Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat.
- Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.
- Choose and prepare foods with less salt.
- (for adults) If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

Great Ways to “Fiber Up”

1. ***Eat a variety of food.*** With a mix of foods, you consume a mix of fibers, both soluble and insoluble. And you get the benefits of both.
2. ***Pick high-fiber grains as snacks,*** such as popcorn, whole-wheat pita with a vegetable filling (See recipe below for vegetable filling), raisin bran cereal with nonfat milk.
3. ***Remember that breakfast is a good time for fiber-rich foods.*** Besides bran cereal or other fiber-rich breakfast cereals, enjoy oatmeal, whole-bran muffins, or whole-wheat waffles.
4. ***Switch to whole-grain breads cereals, buns bagels and pasta.*** Breads with whole grain include cornbread from whole, ground cornmeal, cracked wheat bread, oatmeal break, pumpernickel bread, rye bread, and whole-wheat bread, and bran muffins.
5. ***“Fiberize” your cooking style.*** Substitute higher-fiber ingredients in recipes, such as using part whole-wheat flour in baked foods, or bran in meatloaf.
6. ***Check food labels for fiber facts.*** Almost all food labels carry a Nutrition Facts panel, which lists the amount of fiber per serving. Look for words such as “high in fiber” or “more fiber” on labels, too. Spot fiber-rich ingredients on the ingredients list, such as “bran”, “whole-grain” or “whole-wheat flour.”

Helping children eat more grains, especially whole grains

- 👍 Provide a regular routine for meals and snacks. Be sure to include whole-grain selections in each.
- 👍 Mealtime can be a good family time. Role model healthy eating by including grains and whole grains in your meal choices.
- 👍 Let children make their own food choices at the table.
- 👍 Involve kids in planning meals and snacks. Use this as an opportunity to teach about the benefits of grains.
- 👍 Encourage kids to try new grains and whole grains, without forcing or bribing.
- 👍 Make snacks a healthy way to get enough grains and whole grains in the day’s diet.
 - 😊 Use cookie cutters to make fun shaped sandwiches.
 - 😊 Mix peanut butter and bran flakes in a bowl. Shape the mixture into balls with clean hands. Roll them in crushed graham crackers.
 - 😊 Put a small scoop of ice cream or frozen yogurt between two oatmeal cookies.

Veggie Filling with Whole-Wheat Pita or Whole-Wheat Tortilla

Preparation Time: 15 Minutes

Makes: 4 Servings

- 1 cucumber, peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 small zucchinis, thinly sliced
- 2 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced
- 4 green onions
- 1 clove garlic, chopped (optional)
- 4 large white mushrooms, chopped

In a small bowl, combine all vegetables. Stuff into whole-wheat pita or eat with whole-wheat tortilla wedges.

Each serving of this recipe provides 2 vegetable servings.

Nutrition Information Per Servings: 302 Calories, 4 g Fat, 0 mg Cholesterol, 55 mg Sodium, 60 g Carbohydrate, 11 g Protein